

HOUSE RESOLUTION 256
By Cochran

A RESOLUTION to recognize Mike Lunsford of Cloudland High School on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those outstanding educators and coaches who have performed their duties with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm and, through their magnificent exploits, have brought honor to this State while providing the highest quality of education to the students of this State; and

WHEREAS, Mike Lunsford is one such estimable Tennessean who has distinguished himself as a professional of the greatest dedication, ability, and integrity; and

WHEREAS, Coach Lunsford began his noble service as Head Football Coach of Cloudland High School in 1988; during his fifteen seasons at the helm of the program, he has proven to be a worthy heir to the legacy of legendary Coach John Orr; and

WHEREAS, Coach Lunsford has won much acclaim for his unsurpassed skill as a teacher of sport, and his name has become virtually synonymous with excellence; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure, he has led the smallest football-playing high school, with the smallest talent pool, in the region to remarkable success; in doing so, he developed a program that was feared even by many 4A teams in the area; and

WHEREAS, the Highlanders have missed the playoffs only one time under the leadership of Coach Lunsford; they have advanced to the second round seven times, to the quarterfinals three times, to the semifinals twice, and to the championship game in 2001; and

WHEREAS, with 208 enrolled students at the time, Cloudland was the smallest public high school ever to play for the State championship; and

WHEREAS, with a record of 136-40 and a winning percentage of .773, Coach Lunsford retires as the ninth winningest coach among his Tennessee contemporaries who have participated in more than one hundred games; and

WHEREAS, his winning percentage is the best of any Carter County coach who has coached for at least ten seasons; and

WHEREAS, long known in the football community for his wisdom and leadership, Coach Lunsford earned the respect and admiration of his peers and students alike for the unsurpassed quality of his service; and

WHEREAS, during his illustrious career, he has positively influenced many young lives, and he is wholly devoted to the welfare of Tennessee's youth; he is an extremely talented and compassionate educator who worked assiduously to motivate his students to reach their full potential, as scholars, athletes, and citizens; and

WHEREAS, Coach Lunsford has helped fifteen players reach All-State status and five to garner nominations for Mr. Football, with Dane Christman and Mark Byrd winning the award; and

WHEREAS, he truly serves as an inspiration to his colleagues and students alike, and his friendship and counsel are highly valued by those who are fortunate to know him; he represents all that is good and noble in education; and

WHEREAS, his professional accomplishments aside, he strives to uphold the highest family values and looks forward to having additional time to watch his two children, Jessica and Michael, participate in Highlander athletics; and

WHEREAS, throughout his outstanding career, Mike Lunsford has demonstrated a remarkable ability to motivate his student athletes to reach their potential; he exemplifies the unquestioned character and stalwart determination that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, Coach Lunsford truly epitomizes the ideal of the dedicated teacher who is wholly committed to providing quality education for all, and he should be specially recognized on the occasion of his retirement; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby commend Mike Lunsford for his exceptional service to Cloudland High School as a football coach and history and physical education teacher, salute his professional expertise and personal excellence, and extend to him our best wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and every continued success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.